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**OFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF THE SPEECH**

**DELIVERED BY**

**ADOLF HITLER**

**BEFORE THE GERMAN REICHSTAG**

**ON APRIL 28, 1939**

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## Members of the German Reichstag:

The President of the United States of America has addressed a telegram to me, with the curious contents of which you are already familiar. Before I, the addressee, actually received this document, the rest of the world had already been informed of it by radio and newspaper reports, and numerous commentaries in the organs of the democratic world press had already generously enlightened us as to the fact that this telegram was a very skillful tactical document, destined to impose upon the states, in which the people govern, the responsibility for the war-like measures adopted by the plutocratic countries.

In view of these facts I decided to summon the German Reichstag so that you, gentlemen, might have an opportunity of hearing my answer first and of either confirming that answer or rejecting it. But in addition, I considered it desirable to keep to the method of procedure initiated by President Roosevelt and to inform the rest of the world, on my part and by our own means, of my answer.

But I should like also to take this opportunity of giving expression to the feelings with which the tremendous historical happenings of the month of March inspire me. I can give vent to my deepest feelings only in the form of humble thanks to Providence, who called upon me and vouchsafed it to me, once an unknown soldier of the Great War, to rise to be the Leader of my so dearly-loved people.

Providence caused me to find the way to free our people from its deepest misery without any shedding

of blood, and to lead it upward once more. Providence has granted that I might fulfill my life's task—to raise my German people up out of the depth of defeat and to liberate it from the bonds of the most infamous dictate of all times, for this alone has been the aim of my actions.

Since the day on which I entered politics I have been moved by no other idea than that of winning back the freedom of the German Nation, restoring the power and strength of the Reich, overcoming the internal disruption of the nation, remedying its isolation from the rest of the world, and safeguarding the maintenance of its independent economic and political existence.

I have worked only to restore that which others once broke by force. I have desired only to make good that which satanic malice or human unreason destroyed or demolished. I have, therefore, taken no step which violated the rights of others, but have only restored that justice which was violated twenty years ago.

The present Greater German Reich contains no territory which was not from the earliest times a part of this Reich, not bound up with it or subject to its sovereignty. Long before an American continent had been discovered—to say nothing of settled—by white people, this Reich existed, not merely in its present extent, but with the addition of many regions and provinces which have since been lost.

Twenty-one years ago, when the bloodshed of the war came to an end, millions of minds were filled with the ardent hope that a peace of reason and justice would reward and bless the nations which had been visited by the fearful scourge of the Great War. I



say "reward", for all these men and women—whatever the conclusions arrived at by the historians—bore no responsibility for these fearful happenings, and if in some countries there are still politicians who even at that time could be charged with the responsibility for this, the most atrocious massacre of all times, yet the vast numbers of the combatant soldiers of every country and nation were at the most deserving of pity, but by no means guilty.

I myself, as you know, had never played a part in politics before the war, and only, like millions of others, performed such duties as I was called upon to fulfill as a decent citizen and soldier. It was therefore with an absolutely clear conscience that I was able to take up the cause of the freedom and future of my people, both during and after the war. And I can therefore speak in the name of millions and millions of others equally blameless when I declare that all those, who had only fought for their nation in the loyal fulfillment of their duty, were entitled to a peace of reason and justice, so that mankind might at last set to work to make good by joint effort the losses which all had suffered. But the millions were cheated of this peace; for not only did the German people or the other people fighting on our side suffer through the peace treaties, these treaties also had an annihilating effect on the victor countries.

For the first time it appeared as a misfortune that politics should be controlled by men who had not fought in the war. The feeling of hatred was unknown to the soldiers, but not to those elderly politicians who had carefully preserved their own precious

**Treaty of  
Versailles  
and its  
disastrous  
consequences**

lives from the horror of war, and who now descended upon humanity in the guise of insane spirits of revenge.

Hatred, malice and unreason were the intellectual forbears of the Treaty of Versailles. Living space and states with a history going back a thousand years were arbitrarily broken up and dissolved. Since time immemorial men who belonged together have been torn asunder; economic conditions of life have been ignored while the peoples themselves have been converted into victors and vanquished, into masters possessing all rights and slaves possessing none.

This document of Versailles has fortunately been set down in black and white for later generations, for otherwise it would be later regarded as a fabulous product of a wild, corrupt fantasy. Nearly 115 million people have been robbed of their right of self-determination, not by the victorious soldiers, but by mad politicians and have been arbitrarily removed from old communities and made part of new ones without any consideration of blood, origin, reason, and the economic conditions of life.

The results were dreadful. Though at that time the statesmen were able to destroy a great many things, there was one factor which could not be eliminated; the gigantic mass of people living in Central Europe, crowded together in a confined space, can only ensure its daily bread by the highest intensity of work and consequently of order.

But what did these statesmen of the so-called democratic empires know of these problems?

A crowd of the most stupid and ignorant people was let loose on humanity. In districts in which about 140 people have to gain a livelihood per square kilo-

metre, they merely destroyed the order which had been built up over nearly 2000 years of historical development, and created this order without themselves being able or desirous to solve the problems confronting the communal life of these people—for which, moreover, as dictators of the new world order, they had at that time undertaken responsibility.

However, when this new world order turned out to be a catastrophe, the democratic peace dictators of American and European origin were so cowardly that none of them ventured to take the responsibility for what occurred. Each put the blame on the others, thus endeavoring to save himself from the judgment of history. However, the people who were maltreated by their hatred and unreason were, unfortunately, not in a position to share with those who had injured them in this escape.

It is impossible to enumerate the stages of the suffering of our own people. Robbed of the whole of its colonial possessions, deprived of all its financial resources, plundered by so-called reparations, and thus impoverished, our nation was driven into the blackest period of its national misfortune. And let it be noted that this was not National Socialist Germany, but democratic Germany—the Germany which was weak enough to trust for a single moment the promises of democratic statesmen.

The misery resulting therefrom and the continuous want began to bring our nation politically to despair. The decent and industrious people of Central Europe thought that they could see the possibility of deliverance in the complete destruction of the order which appeared to have become a curse.

Jewish parasites, on the one hand, plundered the



nation ruthlessly and, on the other hand, incited the people when it had been reduced to misery. As the misfortune of our nation became the only aim and object of this race, it was possible to breed among the growing army of unemployed suitable elements for the Bolshevik revolution.

The decay of political order and the confusion of public opinion by the irresponsible Jewish press led to ever stronger shocks to economic life and consequently to increasing misery and to greater readiness to absorb subversive Bolshevik ideas. The army of the Jewish world revolution, as the army of unemployed was called, finally rose to almost seven million.

Germany had never known this state of affairs before. In the living space of the great German people and of the old Habsburg states belonging thereto, despite all the difficulties of the struggle for existence involved by the excessive density of population, economic life had not become more uncertain in the course of time but, on the contrary, more and more secure.

Industry and diligence, great thrift and the love of scrupulous order, though they did not enable the people in this territory to accumulate excessive riches, did at any rate insure them against abject misery.

The results of the wretched peace forced upon them by the democratic dictators were thus all the more terrible for these people who were damned at Versailles. Today we know the reason for this frightful outcome of the Great War.

Firstly, it was the greed for spoils. That which is seldom of value in the life of the individuals, could, they believed, be enlarged a millionfold and be represented to mankind as a useful experiment. If large

nations are plundered and the utmost squeezed out of them, it will then be possible to live a life of care-free idleness. Such was the opinion of these economic dilettantes.

To that end 1) the states themselves had to be dismembered. Germany had to be deprived of her colonial possessions, although they were without any value to the world-democracies; the most important districts yielding raw materials had to be invaded and—if necessary—placed under the influence of the democracies; and above all 2) the unfortunate victims of that democratic ill-treatment of nations and individuals had to be prevented from ever recovering, let alone rising against their oppressors. Thus was concocted the devilish plan to burden generations with the curse of those dictates.

For 60, 70, or 100 years, Germany was to pay sums so exorbitant that the question of how they were actually to be raised could but remain a mystery to all concerned. It would have been absolutely impossible to raise such sums in gold, foreign currency, or by way of regular payments in kind without the blinded collectors of this tribute perishing as well. As a matter of fact these democratic peace dictators thoroughly destroyed world economy with their Versailles madness.

Their senseless dismemberment of peoples and states led to the destruction of common production and trade interests which had become well established in the course of hundreds of years, thus once more enforcing an increased development of autarchic tendencies and thus the extinction of the general conditions of world economy which had hitherto existed.

When, 20 years ago, I signed my name in the book

of political life as the seventh member of the then German Workers Party at Munich, I noticed the signs of that decay becoming effective all around me. The worst of it—as I have already emphasized—was the utter despair of the masses which resulted therefrom, the disappearance among the educated classes of all confidence in human reason, let alone in a sense of justice, and at the same time a predominance of brutal selfishness in all creatures so disposed.

The extent to which in the course of what is now 20 years I have been able once more to mould a nation from such chaotic disorganization into an organic whole and to establish a new order, even now is part of German history. However, what I intend to propound before you today by way of introduction, is above all the purport of my intentions with regard to foreign policy and their realization.

Chancellor  
Hitler's  
foreign  
policy

One of the most shameful acts of oppression ever committed is the dismemberment of the German Nation and the political disintegration of her living space—which has, after all, been hers for thousands of years—provided for in the dictate of Versailles.

I have never, gentlemen, left any doubt that in point of fact it is scarcely possible anywhere in Europe to arrive at a harmony of state and national boundaries which will be satisfactory in every way. On the one hand, the migration of peoples which gradually came to a standstill during the last few centuries, and the development of large communities on the other, have brought about a situation which, whatever way they look at it, must necessarily be considered unsatisfactory by those concerned. It was, however, the very

way in which these national and political developments were gradually stabilized in the last century which led many to consider themselves justified in cherishing the hope that in the end a compromise would be found between respect for the national life of the various European peoples and the recognition of established political structures—a compromise by which, without destroying the political order in Europe and with it the existing economic basis, nationalities could nevertheless be preserved.

This hope was abolished by the Great War. The peace dictate of Versailles did justice neither to one principle nor to the other. Neither the right of self-determination nor yet the political, let alone the economic necessities and conditions for the European development were respected. Nevertheless, I never left any doubt that—as I have already emphasized—even a revision of the Treaty of Versailles would also find its limit somewhere. And I have always said so with the utmost frankness—not for any tactical reasons but for my innermost conviction. As the national leader of the German people, I have never left any doubt that, whenever the higher interests of the European comity were at stake, national interests must, if necessary, be relegated to second place in certain cases.

And—as I have already emphasized—this is not for tactical reasons, for I have never left any doubt that I am absolutely earnest in this attitude of mine. For quite a number of territories which might possibly be disputed I have, therefore, come to final decisions which I have proclaimed not only to the outside world, but also to my own people, and have seen to it that they should abide by them.

Alsace-  
Lorraine

I have not, as France did in 1870/71, described the cession of Alsace-Lorraine as intolerable for the future, but I have here drawn a difference between the Saar territory and these two former imperial provinces. And I have never changed my attitude, nor will I ever do so. I have not allowed this attitude to be modified or jeopardized inside the country on any occasion, either in the press or in any other way. The return of the Saar territory has done away with all territorial problems in Europe between France and Germany. I have, however, always regarded it as regrettable that French statesmen should take this attitude for granted.

This is, however, not the way to look at the matter. It was not for fear of France that I preached this attitude. As a former soldier, I see no reason whatever for such fear. Moreover, as regards the Saar territory I made it quite clear that we would not countenance any refusal to return it to Germany.

No, I have confirmed this attitude to France as an expression of appreciation of the necessity to attain peace in Europe, instead of sowing the seed of continual uncertainty and even tension by making unlimited demands and continually asking for revision. If this tension has nevertheless now arisen, the responsibility does not lie with Germany but with those international elements which systematically produce such tension in order to serve their capitalist interests.

Binding  
relations  
of other  
states

I have given binding declarations to a large number of states. None of these states can complain that even a trace of a demand contrary thereto has ever been made to them by Germany. None of the Scandinavian



statesmen, for example, can contend that a request has ever been put to them by the German government or by German public opinion which was incompatible with the sovereignty and integrity of their state.

I was pleased that a number of European states availed themselves of these declarations by the German government to express and emphasize their desire, too, for absolute neutrality. This applies to Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, etc. I have already mentioned France. I need not mention Italy, with whom we are united in the deepest and closest friendship, Hungary and Yugoslavia, with whom we as neighbours have the fortune to be on very friendly terms.

On the other hand, I have left no doubt from the first moment of my political activity that there existed other circumstances which represent such a mean and gross outrage of the right of self-determination of our people that we can never accept or endorse them.

I have never written a single line or made a single speech displaying a different attitude towards the above-mentioned states. On the other hand, with reference to the other cases, I have never written a single line or made a single speech in which I have expressed any attitude contrary to my actions.

1. Austria, the oldest eastern march of the German people, was once the buttress of the German Nation on the south-east of the Reich.

**Austria**

The Germans of this country are descended from settlers from all the German tribes, even though the Bavarian tribe did contribute the major portion. Later this Ostmark became the crown lands and the

nucleus of a five-century-old German empire, with Vienna as the capital of the German Reich of that period.

This German Reich was finally broken up in the course of a gradual dissolution by Napoleon, the Corsican, but continued to exist as a German federation, and not so long ago fought and suffered in the greatest war of all time as an entity which was the expression of the national feelings of the people, even if it was no longer one united state. I myself am a child of this Ostmark.

Not only was the German Reich destroyed and Austria split up into its component parts by the criminals of Versailles, but Germans were also forbidden to acknowledge that community which they had confessed for more than a thousand years. I have always regarded the elimination of this state of affairs as the highest and most holy task of my life. I have never failed to proclaim this determination, and I have always been resolved to realize these ideas which haunted me day and night.

I should have sinned against my call by Providence had I failed in my own endeavor to lead my native country and my German people of the Ostmark back to the Reich and thus to the community of the German people. In doing so, moreover, I have wiped out the most disgraceful side of the Treaty of Versailles. I have once more established the right of self-determination and done away with the democratic oppression of seven and a half million Germans. I have removed the ban which prevented them from voting on their own fate, and carried out this vote before the whole world. The result was not only what I had expected, but also precisely what had been anticipated by the

Versailles democratic oppressors of peoples. For why else did they stop the plebiscite on the question of Anschluss?

2. Bohemia and Moravia. When in the course of the migrations of peoples Germanic tribes began, for reasons inexplicable for us, to migrate out of the territory which is today Bohemia and Moravia, a foreign Slav people made its way into this territory and made a place for itself between the remaining Germans. Since that time the living space of this Slav people has been enclosed in the form of a horseshoe by Germans.

Bohemia  
and  
Moravia

From an economic point of view an independent existence is, in the long run, impossible for these countries except on the basis of a relationship with the German Nation and German economy. But apart from this, nearly four million Germans lived in this territory of Bohemia and Moravia. A policy of national annihilation which set in, particularly after the Treaty of Versailles, under pressure of the Czech majority combined, too, with economic conditions and the rising tide of distress, led to the emigration of these German elements, so that the Germans left in the territory were reduced to approximately 3.7 million.

The population of the fringe of the territory is uniformly German, but there are also large German linguistic enclaves in the interior. The Czech nation is in its origin foreign to us, but in the thousand years in which the two peoples have lived side by side, Czech culture has in the main been formed and moulded by German influences. Czech economy owes its existence

to the fact of having been part of the great German economic system. The capital of this country was for a time a German imperial city, and it contains the oldest German university. Numerous cathedrals, town halls, and palaces of nobility and citizen class bear witness to the influence of German culture.

The Czech people itself has in the course of centuries alternated between close and more distant contacts with the German people. Every close contact resulted in a period in which both the German and the Czech nations flourished; every estrangement was calamitous in its consequences.

We are familiar with the merits and values of the German people, but the Czech nation, with the sum total of its skill and ability, its industry, its diligence, its love of its native soil and of its own national heritage, also deserves our respect. There were in actual fact periods in which this mutual respect for the qualities of the other nation was a matter of course.

The democratic peacemakers of Versailles can take the credit for having assigned to this Czech people the special role of a satellite state, capable of being used against Germany. For this purpose they arbitrarily adjudicated foreign national property to the Czech state which was utterly incapable of survival on the strength of the Czech national unit alone, that is, they did violence to other nationalities in order to give a firm basis to a state which was to incorporate a latent threat to the German nation in Central Europe.

For this state, in which the so-called predominant national element was actually in a minority, could be maintained only by means of a brutal assault on the

national units which formed the major part of the population. This assault was possible only in so far as protection and assistance was granted by the European democracies. This assistance could naturally be expected only on condition that this state was prepared loyally to take over and play the role which it had been assigned at birth, but the purpose of this role was no other than to prevent the consolidation of Central Europe, to provide a bridge to Europe for Bolshevik aggression, and above all to act as a mercenary of the European democracies against Germany.

Everything followed automatically. The more this state tried to fulfill the task it had been set, the greater was the resistance put up by the national minorities. And the greater the resistance, the more it became necessary to resort to oppression. This inevitable hardening of the internal antithesis led in its turn to an increased dependence on the democratic European founders and benefactors of the state, for they alone were in a position to maintain in the long run the economic existence of this unnatural and artificial creation.

Germany was primarily interested in one thing only and that was to liberate the nearly four million Germans in this country from their unbearable situation, and make it possible for them to return to their home country and to the thousand-year-old Reich. It was only natural that this problem immediately brought up all the other aspects of the nationalities problem. But it was also natural that the removal of the different national groups should deprive what was left of the state of all capacity to survive—a fact of which the founders of the state had been well aware when they planned it at Versailles, since it was for this



very reason that they decided on the assault on the other minorities and had forced these against their will to become part of this amateurishly constructed state.

I have likewise never left any doubt about my opinion and attitude. It is true that, as long as Germany herself was powerless and defenseless, this oppression of almost four million Germans could be carried out without the Reich offering any practical resistance. However, only a child in politics could have believed that the German nation would remain forever in the state it was in 1919. Only as long as the international traitors, supported from abroad, held the direction of the German state, could people rely on these disgraceful conditions being patiently put up with. From the moment when, after the victory of National Socialism, these traitors had to transfer their domicile to the place whence they had received their subsidies, the solution of this problem was only a question of time.

Moreover, it was exclusively a question affecting the nationalities concerned, not one concerning Western Europe. It was certainly understandable that Western Europe was interested in the artificial state brought into being in its interest; but that the nationalities surrounding this state should regard this interest as a determining factor for them was a false conclusion which was perhaps regrettable for many. In as far as this interest was only directed to the financial establishment of this state, Germany could have had nothing to say if this financial interest had not been subjected exclusively to the political aims of the democracies. The financial requirements of this state follow but one guiding idea, namely, creation of a

military state armed to the teeth with a view to forming a bastion extending into the German Reich, which promised to be a starting point for military operations in connection with invasions of the Reich from the west, or at any rate an air base of undoubted value.

What was expected from this state is shown most clearly by the observation of the French Air Minister, M. Pierre Cot, who calmly stated that the duty of this state in case of any conflict was to be an aerodrome for the landing and taking off of bombers, from which it would be possible to destroy the most important German industrial centres in a few hours. It is, therefore, comprehensible that the German government in their turn decided to destroy this aerodrome for bombing planes. They did not come to this decision because of hatred of the Czech people. Quite the contrary! For in the course of the thousand years during which the German and Czech people had lived together, there had often been periods of close co-operation lasting hundreds of years, and between these, it is true, only short periods of tension. In such periods of tension the passions of the people struggling together in the front trenches of the national position can very easily dim the feeling of justice and thus lead to a wrong total impression. This is a feature of every war. It was solely in the long epochs of living together in harmony that the two peoples agreed that they were both entitled to advance a holy claim to deference for and respect of their nationality.

But in these years of struggle my own attitude towards the Czech people was never anything else than that of the guardian of a unilateral national and Reich interest combined with feelings of respect for the

Czech people. One thing is certain: If the democratic midwives of this state had succeeded in attaining their ultimate goal, the German Reich would certainly not have been destroyed, although we might have sustained heavy losses.

No, the Czech people, by reason of its size and position, would presumably have had to put up with much more dreadful and—I am convinced—catastrophic consequences. I feel happy that it has proved possible, even to the annoyance of democratic interests to avoid this catastrophe in Central Europe thanks to our own moderation and also to the good judgment of the Czech people. That which the best and wisest Czechs have struggled for decades to attain, is as a matter of course granted to this people in the National Socialist German Reich, namely, the right to their own nationality and the right to foster this nationality and to revive it. National Socialist Germany has no notion of ever betraying the racial principles of which we are proud. They will be beneficial not only to the German Nation, but to the Czech people as well. But we do demand the recognition of a historical necessity and of an economic exigency in which we all find ourselves. When I announced the solution of this problem in the Reichstag on February 22, 1938, I was convinced that I was obeying the necessity of a Central European situation.

As late as March 10, 1938, I believed that by means of a gradual evolution it might prove possible to solve the problem of minorities in this state and, at one time or another, by means of mutual cooperation to achieve a common platform which would be advantageous to all interests concerned, politically as well as economically.

It was not until M. Benes, who was completely in the hands of his democratic international financiers, turned the problem into a military one and unleashed a wave of suppression over the Germans, at the same time attempting by that mobilization of which you all know, to inflict an international defeat upon the German state and to damage its prestige, that it became clear to me that a solution by these means was no longer possible. For the false report of a German mobilization was quite obviously inspired from abroad and suggested to the Czechs in order to cause the German Reich such loss of prestige.

I need not repeat once more that in May of the past year Germany had not mobilized one single man, although we were all of the opinion that the very fate of Herr Schuschnigg should have shown all others the advisability of working for mutual understanding by means of a more just treatment of national minorities.

I for my part was at any rate prepared to attempt this kind of peaceful development with patience and, if need be, in a process lasting some years. However, it was exactly this peaceful solution which was a thorn in the flesh of the agitators in the democracies.

They hate us Germans and would prefer to eradicate us completely. What do the Czechs mean to them? They are nothing but a means to an end. And what do they care for the fate of a small and valiant nation. Why should they worry about the lives of hundreds of thousands of brave soldiers who would have been sacrificed for their policy?

These Western European peacemongers were not concerned to work for peace but to cause bloodshed, so as in this way to set the nations against one another

and thus cause still more blood to flow. For this reason they invented the story of German mobilization and humbugged Prague public opinion with it. It was intended to provide an excuse for the Czech mobilization; and then by this means they hoped to be able to exert the desired military pressure on the elections in Sudeten Germany which could no longer be avoided.

According to their view there remained only two alternatives for Germany: Either to accept this Czech mobilization and with it a disgraceful blow to her prestige, or the settling of accounts with Czechoslovakia, a bloody war, and thus perhaps the possibility of mobilizing the nations of Western Europe who had no interest in these matters, thereby involving them in the inevitable bloodlust so as to immerse humanity in a new catastrophe in which some would have the honor of losing their lives and others the pleasure of making war profits.

You are acquainted, gentlemen, with the decisions I made at the time:

1. the solution of this question and, what is more, by October 2, 1938, at the latest;
2. the preparations of this solution with all the means necessary to leave no doubt that any attempt at intervention would be met by the united force of the whole nation.

It was at this juncture that I decreed and ordered the construction of the western fortifications. On September 25, 1938, they were already in such a condition that their power of resistance was 30—40 times as great as that of the old Siegfried Line in the Great War. They have now been practically completed and are at the present moment being enlarged by the new



lines outside Aachen and Saarbruecken which I ordered later. These, too, are very largely ready for defense.

In view of the condition of these greatest fortifications ever constructed, the German Nation may feel perfectly assured that no power in this world will ever succeed in ever breaking through this front.

When the first provocative attempt at utilizing the Czech mobilization had failed to lead to the desired result, there then set in the second phase in which the tendency of this affair, which really concerned Central Europe alone, became all the more obvious.

If the cry of "Never another Munich" is raised in the world today, this simply confirms the fact that the peaceful solution of the problem appeared to be the most fatal thing that ever happened in the eyes of those warmongers. They are sorry no blood was shed—not their blood, of course—for these agitators are, of course, never to be found where shots are being fired, but only where money is being made! No, it is the blood of many nameless soldiers!

Moreover, there would have been no necessity for the Munich conference, for that conference was only made possible by the fact that the countries which had at first incited those concerned to resist at all costs, later on, when the situation pressed for a solution in one way or another, were compelled to try and to secure for themselves a more or less respectable retreat; for without Munich—that is to say, without the interference of the countries of Western Europe—a solution of the entire problem—if it had ever grown so acute—would very likely have been the easiest thing in the world.

The decision of Munich led to the following result:

1. The return of the most essential parts of the German border settlements in Bohemia and Moravia to the Reich;

2. The keeping open of the possibility of a solution of the other problems of that state—that is a return or separation of the existing Hungarian and Slovak minorities;

3. There still remained the question of guarantees. As far as Germany and Italy were concerned, the guarantee of this state had, from the first, been made dependent upon the consent of all interested parties bordering on Czechoslovakia, that is to say, the guarantee was coupled with the actual solution of problems concerning the parties mentioned which were still unsolved.

The following problems were still left open:

1. The return of the Magyar districts to Hungary;

2. The return of the Polish districts to Poland;

3. The solution of the Slovak question;

4. The solution of the Ukrainian question.

As you know, the negotiations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia had scarcely begun when both the Czechoslovak and the Hungarian negotiators requested Germany and Italy, the country which stands side by side with Germany, to act as arbitrators in defining the new frontiers between Slovakia, the Carpatho-Ukraine, and Hungary. The countries concerned made no use themselves of the possibility of appealing to the four powers; on the contrary, they expressly renounced this possibility, that is, they declined it. And this was only natural. All the people living in this territory desired peace and quiet. Italy and Germany were prepared to answer the call. Neither Eng-

land nor France raised any objection to this arrangement which actually constituted a formal departure from the Munich agreement. Nor was it possible for them to do so. It would have been madness for Paris or London to have protested against an action on the part of Germany or Italy which had been undertaken solely at the request of the countries concerned. The decision arrived at by Germany and Italy proved—as always in such cases—entirely satisfactory to neither party. From the very beginning the difficulty was that it had to be voluntarily accepted by both parties. Thus, when the decision came to be put into effect, violent protests were raised immediately following on the acceptance by the two states.

Hungary, prompted by general and particular interests, demanded the Carpatho-Ukraine, while Poland demanded direct means of communication with Hungary.

It was clear that in such circumstances even the remnant of the state which Versailles had brought into being was predestined to extinction. It was a fact that perhaps only one single state was interested in the preservation of the status quo and that was Rumania; the man best authorized to speak on behalf of that country told me personally how desirable it would be to have a direct line of communication with Germany, perhaps via the Ukraine and Slovakia.

I mention this as an illustration of the feeling of being menaced by Germany from which the Rumanian government—according to the American clairvoyants—are supposed to be suffering. But it was now clear that it could not be Germany's task permanently to oppose a development or actually to fight for the maintenance of a state of affairs for which we could

never have made ourselves responsible. The stage was thus reached at which, in the name of the German government, I decided to make a declaration to the effect that we had no intention of any longer incurring the reprobation of opposing the common wishes of Poland and Hungary as regards their frontiers, simply in order to keep an open road of approach for Germany to Rumania.

Since, moreover, the Czech government resorted once more to its old methods, and Slovakia also gave expression to its desire for independence, the further existence of the state was out of the question. The construction of Czechoslovakia worked out at Versailles had had its day.

It broke up not because Germany desired its break-up, but because, in the long run, it is impossible to construct and uphold around the conference table artificial states which are incapable of survival. Consequently, in reply to a question regarding the guarantee which was submitted by England and France a few days before the dissolution of this state, Germany refused this guarantee, since all the conditions for it laid down at Munich were lacking.

On the contrary, when, after the whole structure of the state had begun to break up and, practically speaking, had already dissolved itself—the German government finally decided also to intervene. It did this only in fulfillment of an obvious duty, for the following points should be noted: On the occasion of the first visit of the Czech Foreign Minister, M. Chvalkovsky, in Munich the German government plainly expressed their views on the future of Czechoslovakia. I myself assured M. Chvalkovsky on that occasion that, provided loyal treatment was meted out to the

large German minorities remaining in the Czech territory and provided a general appeasement of the whole state was attained, we would guarantee a loyal attitude on the part of Germany, and would, for our part, place no obstacles in the way of the state.

But I also made it clear beyond all doubt that if the Czechs were to undertake any steps in line with the political tendencies of Dr. Benes, the former president, Germany would not put up with any development along such lines, but would stifle it in its earliest stages. I also pointed out at that time that the maintenance of such a tremendous military arsenal in Central Europe for no reason or purpose could only be regarded as a focus of danger.

Later developments proved how justified my warning had been. A continuous and rising tide of underground propaganda and a gradual tendency on the part of Czech newspapers to relapse into the old style of writing made it finally clear even to the greatest simpleton that the old state of affairs would soon be restored.

The danger of a military conflict was all the greater as there was always the possibility that some madman or other might get control of the vast stores of munitions. This involved the danger of immense explosion. As a proof of this, I cannot refrain, gentlemen, from giving you an idea of the truly gigantic amounts of this international store of explosives in Central Europe.

Since the occupation of this territory, the following have been confiscated and placed in safe keeping:

Air Force: airplanes, 1,582; antiaircraft guns, 501.

Army: guns, light and heavy, 2,175; mine throwers,



785; tanks, 469; machine guns, 43,876; automatic pistols, 114,000; rifles, 1,090,000.

Ammunition: infantry ammunition, over 1,000,000,000 rounds; shells, over 3,000,000 rounds; other implements of war of all kinds, for example, bridge-building equipment, aircraft detectors, searchlights, measuring instruments, motor vehicles and special motor vehicles—in vast quantities!

I believe it is a good thing for millions and millions of people that I, thanks to the last-minute insight of responsible men on the other side, succeeded in averting such an explosion and found a solution which, I am convinced, has finally abolished this problem of a source of danger in Central Europe.

Munich  
agreement  
no final  
solution

The contention that this solution is contrary to the Munich agreement can neither be supported nor confirmed. This agreement could, under no circumstances, be regarded as final because it admitted that other problems required and remained to be solved.

We cannot really be reproached for the fact that the parties concerned—and this is the deciding factor—did not turn to the four powers but only to Italy and Germany; nor yet for the fact that the state as such finally split up of its own accord and there was, consequently, no longer any Czecho-Slovakia.

It was, however, understandable that long after the ethnographic principle had been made invalid, Germany should take under her protection her interests dating back a thousand years, which are not only of a political but also of an economic nature.

The future will show whether the solution which Germany has found is right or wrong. However, it

is certain that the solution is not subject to English supervision or criticism. For Bohemia and Moravia as the remnants of former Czechoslovakia have nothing more whatever to do with the Munich agreement. Just as English measures in, say Northern Ireland, whether they be right or wrong, are not subject to German supervision or criticism.

This is also the case with these old German electorates. However, I entirely fail to understand how the agreement reached between Mr. Chamberlain and myself at Munich can refer to this case, for the case of Czecho-Slovakia was settled in the Munich protocol of the four powers as far as it could be settled at all at that time.

Apart from this, provision was merely made that if the interested parties should fail to come to an agreement they should be entitled to appeal to the four powers who had agreed in such a case, to meet for further consultation after the expiration of three months.

However, these interested parties did not appeal to the four powers at all but only to Germany and Italy. That this was fully justified, moreover, is proven by the fact that neither England nor France have raised any objections thereto but have themselves accepted the decision given by Germany and Italy.

No, the agreement reached between Mr. Chamberlain and myself did not relate to this problem but exclusively to questions which refer to the mutual relationship between England and Germany. This is clearly shown by the fact that such questions are to be treated in the future in the spirit of the Munich

Anglo-  
German  
relations

agreement and of the Anglo-German naval agreement, that is, in a friendly spirit by way of consultation.

If, however, this agreement were to be applied to every future German activity of a political nature, England, too, should not take any step, whether in Palestine or elsewhere, without first consulting Germany. It is obvious that we do not expect this; likewise, we refuse to gratify any similar expectation of us.

Now, if Mr. Chamberlain concludes from this that the Munich agreement is for this reason annulled, as if we had broken it, then I shall take cognizance of the fact and proceed accordingly.

During the whole of my political activity I have always expounded the idea of a close friendship and collaboration between Germany and England. In my movement I found innumerable others of like mind. Perhaps they joined me because of my attitude in this matter. This desire for Anglo-German friendship and cooperation conforms not merely to sentiments which result from the racial origins of our two peoples but also to my realization of the importance for the whole of mankind of the existence of the British Empire.

I have never left room for any doubt of my belief that the existence of this empire is an inestimable factor of value for the whole of human cultural and economic life. By whatever means Great Britain has acquired her colonial territories—and I know that they were those of force and often brutality—nevertheless I know full well that no other empire has ever come into being in any other way, and that, in the final resort, it is not so much the methods that are taken into account in history as success and not the success of the methods as such but rather the general good which the methods yield.

Now, there is no doubt that the Anglo-Saxon people have accomplished immeasurable colonizing work in the world. For this work I have sincere admiration.

The thought of destroying this labor appeared and still appears to me, seen from a higher human point of view, as nothing but an effluence of human wanton destructiveness. However, this sincere respect of mine for this achievement does not mean foregoing the securing of the life of my own people.

I regard it as impossible to achieve a lasting friendship between the German and the Anglo-Saxon peoples if the other side does not recognize that there are German as well as British interests, that not only is the preservation of the British Empire the meaning and purpose of the lives of Britons, but also that for Germans the freedom and preservation of the German Reich is their life purpose.

A genuine lasting friendship between these two nations is only conceivable on the basis of mutual regard. The English people rule a great empire. They built up this empire at a time when the German people were internally weak.

Previously, Germany had been a great empire. At one time she ruled the Occident. In bloody struggles and religious dissensions, and as a result of internal political disintegration, this empire declined in power and greatness and finally fell into a deep sleep.

But as this old empire appeared to have reached its end, the seeds of its rebirth were springing up. From Brandenburg and Prussia there arose a new Germany, the Second Reich, and out of it has grown at last the German People's Reich.

And I hope that all English people understand that we do not possess the slightest feeling of inferiority

to Britons. Our historical part is far too tremendous for that!

England has given the world many great men and Germany no fewer. The severe struggle for the maintenance of the life of our people has, in the course of three centuries, cost a sacrifice in lives, which far exceeds that which other peoples have had to make in asserting their existence.

If Germany, a country that was forever being attacked, was not able to retain her possessions but was compelled to sacrifice many of her provinces, this was due only to her political misdevelopment and her impotence as a result thereof.

That condition has now been overcome. Therefore, we Germans do not feel in the least inferior to the British Nation. Our self-esteem is just as great as that of an Englishman for England. In the history of our people, now of approximately two thousand years standing, there are occasions and actions enough to fill us with sincere pride.

Now, if England cannot understand our point of view, thinking perchance she may look upon Germany as a vassal state, then our love and friendly feelings have indeed been wasted on England. We shall not despair or lose heart on that account, but—relying on the consciousness of our own strength and on the strength of our friends—we shall then find ways and means to secure our independence without impairing our dignity.

I have heard the statement of the British Prime Minister to the effect that he is not able to put any trust in German assurances. Under the circumstances I consider it a matter of course that we no longer wish to expect him or the British people to bear the

burden of a situation which is only conceivable in an atmosphere of mutual confidence.

When Germany became National Socialist and thus paved the way for her national resurrection in pursuance of my unswerving policy of friendship with England, of my own accord, I made the proposal for voluntary restriction of German naval armaments. That restriction was, however, based on one condition, namely, the will and the conviction that a war between England and Germany would never again be possible. This wish and this conviction are alive in me today.

Anglo-  
German  
naval  
treaty

I am now, however, compelled to state that the policy of England is both unofficially and officially leaving no doubt about the fact that such a conviction is no longer shared in London, and that, on the contrary, the opinion prevails there that no matter in what conflict Germany should some day be entangled, Great Britain would always have to take her stand against Germany. Thus, war against Germany is taken for granted in that country.

I most profoundly regret such a development, for the only claim I have ever made and shall continue to make on England is that for a return of our colonies. But I always made it very clear that this would never become a cause of military conflict. I have always held that the English, to whom those colonies are of no value, would one day understand the German situation and would then value German friendship higher than the possession of territories which, while yielding no real profit whatever to them, are of vital importance to Germany.

Apart from this, however, I have never advanced

a claim which might in any way have interfered with British interests or have become a danger to the empire and thus have meant any kind of damage to England. I have always kept within the limit of such demands as are intimately connected with Germany's living space, and thus the eternal property of the German nation.

Basis for  
naval  
treaty  
removed

Since England today, both by the press and officially, upholds the view that Germany should be opposed under all circumstances and confirms this by the policy of encirclement known to us, the basis for the naval treaty has been removed. I have therefore resolved to send today a communication to this effect to the British Government.

This is to us not a matter of practical material importance—for I still hope that we shall be able to avoid an armaments race with England—but an action of self-respect. Should the British Government, however, wish to enter once more into negotiations with Germany on this problem, no one would be happier than I at the prospect of still being able to come to a clear and straightforward understanding.

Moreover, I know my people—and I rely on them. We do not want anything that did not formerly belong to us and no state will ever be robbed by us of its property; but whoever believes that he is able to attack Germany will find himself confronted with a measure of power and resistance compared with which that of 1914 was negligible.

In connection with this I wish to speak at once of that matter which was chosen by the same circles who caused the mobilization of Czecho-Slovakia as starting-point for the new campaign against the Reich.



I have already assured you, gentlemen, at the beginning of my speech, that never either in the case of Austria or in the case of Czecho-Slovakia have I adopted in my political life any attitude which is not compatible with events which have now happened. I, therefore, pointed out in connection with the problem of the Memel Germans that this question, if it was not solved by Lithuania herself in a dignified and generous manner, would one day have to be raised by Germany herself.

You know that the Memel territory was also once torn from the Reich quite arbitrarily by the dictate of Versailles and that finally, in the year 1923, that is, already in the midst of a period of complete peace, this territory was occupied by Lithuania and thus more or less confiscated. The fate of the Germans has since then been a real martyrdom.

In the course of the reincorporation of Bohemia and Moravia within the framework of the German Reich it was also possible for me to come to an agreement with the Lithuanian Government which allowed the return of this territory to Germany without any act of violence and without shedding blood. Also in this instance I have not demanded one square mile more than we formerly possessed and which was stolen from us.

This means, therefore, that only that territory has returned to the German Reich which had been torn from us by the madmen who dictated peace at Versailles. But this solution, I am convinced, will only prove advantageous to the relations between Germany and Lithuania, seeing that Germany, as our behavior has proved, has no other interest than to live in peace and friendship with this state and to establish and foster economic relations with it.

Return  
of the  
Memel  
territory  
to Germany

In this connection I wish to make one point perfectly clear:

The significance of the economic agreements with Germany lies not only in the fact that Germany is able as exporter to meet almost all industrial requirements, but that she, being a very large consumer, is at the same time also a purchaser of numerous products which alone enable other countries to participate in international trade at all.

We are interested not only in retaining these economic markets, but especially in promoting good relations with them because the existence of our people is based to a large extent thereon. So-called democratic statesmen look upon it as one of their greatest political achievements to exclude a nation from its markets, for example, by boycott, so, as I presume, to starve it out. I need not assure you that I am convinced that a nation would fight rather than starve under such circumstances.

As far as Germany is concerned, she is in any case determined not to allow certain economically important markets to be stolen from her by terroristic intervention or threats.

This, however, is not only in our own interest but also in the interest of our trade partners. Here, as in every business, it is not a one-sided but a mutual dependency.

How often do we have the pleasure of reading in the amateurish economic articles of our democratic newspapers that Germany, because she maintains close economic relations with a country, makes that country dependent upon her. This is sheer, hair-raising, Jewish nonsense. For if Germany supplies an agrarian country today with machines and receives

foodstuffs in payment, the Reich, as consumer of foodstuffs, is at least as dependent, if not more dependent, on the agrarian country as the latter is dependent on us from whom it receives industrial products in payment.

Germany regards the Baltic States as one of its most important trade partners. And for this reason it is in our interest that these countries should lead an independent, ordered national life of their own.

This is in our opinion the necessary condition for that internal economic development which is again the condition upon which the exchange of goods depends.

I am, therefore, happy that we have been able to dispose also of the point of dispute between Lithuania and Germany, for this does away with the only obstacle in the way of the policy of friendship which can prove its worth—as I am convinced it will—not in political compliments but in practical economic measures.

The democratic world was, it is true, once more extremely sorry that there was no bloodshed—that 175,000 Germans were able to return to the homeland which they loved above everything else, without a few hundred thousands of others having to be shot for it!

This grieved the apostles of humanitarianism deeply. It was, therefore, no wonder that they immediately began to look out for new possibilities of bringing about a thorough disturbance of the European atmosphere after all. And so, as in the case of Czechoslovakia, they again resorted to the assertion that Germany was taking military steps, that it was supposedly mobilizing. This mobilization was said to be directed against Poland.

**German-Polish relations**

There is little to be said as regards German-Polish relations. Here, too, the Peace Treaty of Versailles—of course, intentionally—inflicted the most severe wound on Germany. The strange way in which the corridor, giving Poland access to the sea, was marked out was meant above all to prevent for all time the establishment of an understanding between Poland and Germany. This problem is—as I have already stressed—perhaps the most painful of all problems for Germany.

Nevertheless, I have never ceased to uphold the view that the necessity of a free access to the sea for the Polish State cannot be ignored and that is a general principle valid for this case, too. Nations which Providence has destined or, if you like, condemned to live side by side, would be well advised not to make life still harder for each other artificially and unnecessarily.

**German-Polish agreement**

The late Marshal Pilsudski, who was of the same opinion, was, therefore, prepared to go into the question of clarifying the atmosphere of German-Polish relations and finally to conclude an agreement whereby Germany and Poland expressed their intention of renouncing war altogether as a means of settling the questions which concerned them both.

This agreement contained one single exception which was in practice conceded to Poland. It was laid down that the pacts of mutual assistance already entered into by Poland—this applied to a pact with France—should not be affected by the agreement. But it was obvious that this could apply only to the pact of mutual assistance already concluded beforehand, and not to

whatever new pacts might be concluded in the future.

It is a fact that the German-Polish agreement resulted in remarkable lessening of European tension. Nevertheless, there remained one open question between Germany and Poland which sooner or later, quite naturally, had to be solved—the question of the German City of Danzig.

Danzig is a German city and wishes to belong to Germany. On the other hand this city has contracts with Poland which were admittedly forced upon it by the dictators of the Peace of Versailles. But since, moreover, the League of Nations, formerly the greatest stirrer-up of trouble, is now represented by a high commissioner—incidentally a man of extraordinary tact—the problem of Danzig must in any case come up for discussion at the latest with the gradual extinction of this calamitous institution.

The  
Danzig  
question

I regarded the peaceful settlement of this problem as a further contribution to the final loosening of the European tension. For this loosening of the tension is assuredly not to be achieved through the agitations of insane war-mongers, but through the removal of the real elements of danger.

After the problem of Danzig had already been discussed several times some months ago, I made a concrete offer to the Polish Government. I now make this offer known to you, gentlemen, and you yourselves will judge whether this offer did not represent the greatest imaginable concession in the interests of European peace.

As I have already pointed out, I have always seen the necessity of an access to the sea for this country

and have consequently taken this necessity into consideration. I am no democratic statesman, but a National-Socialist and a realist.

I considered it, however, necessary to make it clear to the government in Warsaw that just as they desire access to the sea, so Germany needs access to her province in the East. Now, these are all difficult problems.

It was not Germany who is responsible for them, however, but rather the jugglers of Versailles who, either in their maliciousness or their thoughtlessness, placed 100 powder barrels round about in Europe, all equipped with hardly extinguishable lighted fuses.

These problems cannot be solved according to old-fashioned ideas, I think, rather that we should adopt new methods.

Poland's access to the sea by way of the Corridor and, on the other hand, a German route through the Corridor have no kind of military importance whatsoever. Their importance is exclusively psychological and economic. To accord military importance to a traffic route of this kind, would be to show one's self completely ignorant of military affairs. Consequently, I have had the following proposal submitted to the Polish Government:

1. Danzig returns as a Free State into the framework of the German Reich.

2. Germany receives a route through the Corridor and a railway line at her own disposal possessing the same extra-territorial status for Germany as the Corridor itself has for Poland.

In return, Germany is prepared:

1. To recognize all Polish economic rights in Danzig.
2. To insure for Poland a free harbor in Danzig of

any size desired which would have completely free access to the sea.

3. To accept at the same time the present boundaries between Germany and Poland and to regard them as ultimate.

4. To conclude a twenty-five-year non-aggression treaty with Poland, a treaty, therefore which would extend far beyond the duration of my own life; and

5. To guarantee the independence of the Slovak State by Germany, Poland and Hungary jointly,—which means in practice, renunciation of any unilateral German hegemony in this territory.

The Polish Government has rejected my offer and has only declared it is prepared to:

1. Negotiate concerning the question of a substitute for the Commissioner of the League of Nations, and

2. To consider facilities for the transit traffic through the Corridor.

I have regretted dearly this incomprehensible attitude of the Polish Government, but that alone is not the decisive fact; the worst is that now Poland, like Czecho-Slovakia a year ago, believes, under the pressure of a lying international campaign, that it must call up troops although Germany on her part has not called up a single man and had not thought of proceeding in any way against Poland.

As I have said, this is in itself very regrettable, and posterity will one day decide whether it was really right to refuse this suggestion, made this once by me. This—as I have said—was an endeavor on my part to solve a question which intimately affects the German people by truly unique compromise and to solve it to the advantage of both countries.



According to my conviction, Poland was not a giving party in this solution at all but only a receiving party, because it should be beyond all doubt that Danzig will never become Polish.

The intention to attack on the part of Germany, which was merely invented by the international press, led, as you know, to a so-called guarantee offer and to an obligation on the part of the Polish Government for mutual assistance, which would also, under certain circumstances, compel Poland to take military action against Germany in the event of a conflict between Germany and any other power, and in which England, in her turn, would be involved.

This obligation is contradictory to the agreement which I made with Marshal Pilsudski some time ago, seeing that in this agreement reference is made exclusively to existing obligations, that is, at that time, namely, to the obligations of Poland towards France of which we were aware. To extend these obligations subsequently is contrary to the terms of the German-Polish non-aggression pact.

Abrogation of  
German-  
Polish  
treaty

Under these circumstances I should not have entered into this pact at that time, because what sense can non-aggression pacts have if one partner in practice leaves open an enormous number of exceptions? There is either collective security, that is collective insecurity and continuous danger of war, or clear agreements which, however, exclude fundamentally any use of arms between the contracting parties. I, therefore, look upon the agreement which Marshal Pilsudski and I at one time concluded as having been unilaterally infringed by Poland and thereby no longer in existence.

I have sent a communication to this effect to the Polish Government. However, I can only repeat at this point that my decision does not constitute a modification of my attitude in principle with regards to the problems mentioned above. Should the Polish Government wish to come to fresh contractual arrangements governing its relations with Germany, I can but welcome such an idea, provided, of course, that these arrangements are based on an absolutely clear obligation binding both parties in equal measure.

Germany is perfectly willing at any time to undertake such obligations and also to fulfill them. If for these reasons fresh unrest has broken out in Europe during the last few weeks, responsibility therefore lies solely in the propaganda in the service of the international warmongers, which we know well and which, conducted by numerous organs of the democratic states, endeavors, by continually increasing nervousness and inventing continual rumors, to make Europe ripe for a catastrophe. That catastrophe from which it is hoped to achieve what has not yet been brought about, namely, Bolshevik destruction of European civilization!

The hate of these mischief makers is the more readily to be understood as they were deprived of one of the greatest danger spots of the European crisis, thanks to the heroism of one man, his nation and—I may say—also thanks to Italian and German volunteers.

The victory  
of  
Nationalist  
Spain

In the past weeks Germany has experienced and celebrated the victory of Nationalist Spain with the most fervent sympathy. As I resolved to answer the

plea of General Franco to give him the assistance of National Socialist Germany in countering the international support of the Bolshevik incendiaries, this step of Germany's was misinterpreted and abused in the most infamous way by these same international agitators.

They declared at the time that Germany intended to establish herself in Spain and proposed taking Spanish colonies; indeed, the landing of 20,000 soldiers in Morocco was invented as an infamous lie. In short, nothing was omitted that could cast suspicion on the idealism of our and the Italian support in order to find the material for fresh warmongering.

In a few weeks now, the victorious hero of Nationalist Spain will celebrate his festive entry into the capital of his country. The Spanish people will acclaim him as their deliverer from unspeakable horrors and as the liberator from bands of incendiaries who are estimated to have more than 775,000 human lives on their conscience through executions and murders alone.

The inhabitants of whole villages and towns were literally butchered under the silent, benevolent patronage of West European and American democratic humanitarian apostles

In this, his triumphal procession, the volunteers of our German legion will march, together with their Italian comrades, in the ranks of the valiant Spanish soldiers. We hope to be able to welcome them home soon afterwards. The German Nation will then know how bravely its sons have played their part on that soil, too, in the struggle for the liberty of a noble people and therewith for the salvation of European civilization; for if the subhuman forces of Bolshevism had

proved victorious in Spain, they might easily have spread across the whole of Europe.

Hence, the hatred of those who are disappointed that Europe did not once more go up in fire and flames. And for this reason they are doubly anxious to miss no opportunity of sowing the seeds of mistrust among the nations and stirring up somewhere else the war atmosphere which they so much desire.

The things which these international warmongers have in the past few weeks fabricated in lying assertions and published in numerous newspapers are, in part, just as childish as they are malicious.

The first result—in as far as this is not intended to serve the internal political purposes of the democratic governments—is the spreading of a nervous hysteria which already considers the landing of inhabitants of Mars in the land of unlimited possibilities. The real purpose, however, is to prepare public opinion to regard the English policy of encirclement as necessary and, consequently, to support it should the worst come to the worst.

The German people, on the other hand, can go about their business with perfect tranquillity. Their frontiers are guarded by the best army in the history of Germany. The air above is protected by the most powerful air fleet, and our coasts are rendered unassailable by any enemy power. In the west, the strongest defensive work of all times has been built.

But the deciding factors are the unity of the German Nation as a whole, the confidence of all Germans in one another and in their fighting forces and—I may say—the faith of all in their leadership.

But the trust of the leader and the people in our friends is no less. And at the head of the latter is

the state which is closest to us in every respect as a result of the common destinies which unite us. In this year again Fascist Italy has shown the greatest understanding for rightful German interests. No one need be surprised if we, for our part, have the same feelings toward the Italian necessities for existence. The bond which unites the two peoples is unbreakable. Any attempt to throw doubt on this fact appears to us ridiculous.

In any case, it is best illustrated and explained in an article which appeared a few days ago in a leading democratic newspaper, which stated that it should no longer be regarded possible to separate Italy and Germany so as to destroy them separately.

**Italian Action  
in Albania**

Thus the German Government, in full understanding, appreciate the right of the action taken by their Italian friend in Albania and have, therefore, welcomed it. Yes, it is not only the right, but also the duty of Fascism to secure in the living space undoubtedly allotted to Italy by nature and history the maintenance of an order, on which alone a really flourishing human civilization appears to be based and secured.

After all, there can be just as little doubt in the rest of the world concerning the civilizing work of Fascism as there is about that of National Socialism.

In both instances indisputable facts are testimony against the unfounded brag and unproved statements of the other side. To create still closer relations between Germany, Italy and Japan is the constant aim of the German Government. We regard the existence and maintenance of the freedom and independ-

ence of these three great powers as the strongest factor in the future making for the preservation of a true human culture, a practical civilization and just order in the world.

As mentioned at the beginning, the world on April 15, 1939, was informed of the contents of a telegram which I myself did not see until later. It is difficult to classify this document or to arrange it in any known scheme. I will, therefore, endeavor before you, gentlemen, and thus before the whole German people, to analyze the necessary answers in your name and in that of the German people.

President  
Roosevelt's  
Appeal

## I.

Mr. Roosevelt is of the opinion that I, too, must realize that throughout the world hundreds of millions of human beings are living in constant fear of a new war or even a series of wars.

This, he says, is of concern to the people of the United States, for whom he speaks, as it must also be to the peoples of the other nations of the entire Western Hemisphere.

In reply to this it must be said in the first place that this fear of war has undoubtedly existed among mankind from time immemorial, and justifiably so.

For instance, after the peace treaty of Versailles, 14 wars were waged between 1919 and 1938 alone, in none of which Germany was concerned, but in which states of the "Western Hemisphere" in whose name President Roosevelt also speaks, were indeed concerned.

In addition there were in the same period 26 violent

interventions and sanctions carried through by means of bloodshed and force.

Germany also played no part whatever in these. The United States alone has carried out military interventions in six cases since 1918. Since 1918 Soviet Russia has engaged in 10 wars and military actions involving force and bloodshed.

Again, Germany was concerned in none of these, nor was she the cause of any of these events. It would therefore be a mistake in my eyes to assume that the fear of war inspiring European and non-European nations can at this present time be directly traced back to actual wars at all.

The reason for this fear lies simply and solely in an unbridled agitation on the part of the press, an agitation as mendacious as it is base in the circulation of vile pamphlets about the heads of foreign states, and in an artificial spreading of panic which in the end goes so far that interventions from another planet are believed possible and cause scenes of desperate alarm.

I believe that as soon as the responsible governments impose upon themselves and their journalistic organs the necessary restraint and truthfulness as regards the relations of the various countries to one another, and in particular as regards internal happenings in other countries, the fear of war will disappear at once and the tranquillity which we all desire so much will become possible.

## II.

In his telegram Mr. Roosevelt expresses the belief that every major war, even if it were to be confined to other continents, must have serious consequences



while it lasts, and also for generations to come.

Answer: No one knows this better than the German people. For the peace treaty of Versailles imposed burdens on the German people, which could not have been paid off even in a hundred years, although it has been proved precisely by American teachers of constitutional law, historians and professors of history that Germany was no more to blame for the outbreak of the war than any other nation.

But I do not believe that every conflict must have disastrous consequences for the whole surrounding world, that is, for the whole globe, provided the whole world is not systematically drawn into such conflicts by means of a network of nebulous pact obligations.

For since in the past centuries and—as I pointed out at the beginning of my answer—also in the course of the last decades, the world has experienced a continuous series of wars. If Mr. Roosevelt's assumption were correct, humanity would already have a burden in the sum total of the outcome of all these wars, which it would have to bear for millions of years to come.

### III.

Mr. Roosevelt declared that he had already appealed to me on a former occasion on behalf of a peaceful settlement of political, economic and social problems and without resort to arms.

Answer: I myself have always been an exponent of this view and, as history proves, have settled necessary political, economic and social problems without force of arms, that is, without resort to arms.

Unfortunately, however, this peaceful settlement has been made more difficult by the agitation of politi-

cians, statesmen and newspaper representatives who were neither directly concerned nor even affected by the problems in question.

#### IV.

Mr. Roosevelt believes that the "tide of events" is once more bringing the threat of arms with it, and that if this threat continues, a large part of the world is condemned to a common ruin.

Answer: As far as Germany is concerned, I know nothing of this kind of threat to other nations, although I every day read in the democratic newspapers lies about such a threat.

Every day I read of German mobilizations, of the landing of troops, of extortions—all this in regard to states with whom we are, not only living in deepest peace but also with whom we are, in many cases, the closest friends.

#### V.

Mr. Roosevelt believes further that in case of war victorious, vanquished and neutral nations will all suffer.

Answer: As a politician I have been the exponent of this conviction for 20 years, at a time when, unfortunately, the responsible statesmen in America could not bring themselves to make the same admission as regards their participation in the Great War and its issue.

#### VI.

Mr. Roosevelt believes lastly that it lies with the leaders of the great nations to preserve their peoples from the impending disaster.

Answer: If that is true, then it is a punishable neglect, to use no worse word, if the leaders of nations with corresponding powers are not capable of controlling their newspapers which are agitating for war, and so to save the world from the threatening calamity of an armed conflict.

I am not able to understand, further, why these responsible leaders instead of cultivating diplomatic relations between nations, make them more difficult and indeed disturb them by recalling ambassadors, etc., without any reason.

## VII.

Mr. Roosevelt declared finally that three nations in Europe and one in Africa have seen their independent existence terminated.

Answer: I do not know which three nations in Europe are meant. Should it be a question of the provinces reincorporated in the German Reich, I must draw the attention of Mr. Roosevelt to a historical error.

It is not now that these nations sacrificed their independent existence in Europe, but rather in 1918 when they, contrary to solemn promises, were separated from their communities and made into nations which they never wished to be and never were, and when they had forced upon them an independence which was no independence but at the most could only mean dependence upon an international foreign world which they hated.

As for the fact, however, that one nation in Africa is alleged to have lost its freedom—that, too, is but an error, for it is not a question of one nation in Africa having lost its freedom—on the contrary,

practically all the previous inhabitants of this continent have been made subject to the sovereignty of other nations by bloody force, thereby losing their freedom.

Moroccans, Berbers, Arabs, Negroes, etc., have all fallen victim to foreign might, the swords of which, however, were inscribed not "Made in Germany", but "Made by Democracies".

### VIII.

Mr. Roosevelt then speaks of the reports which admittedly he does not believe to be correct, but which state that further acts of aggression are contemplated against still other independent nations.

Answer: I consider every such unfounded insinuation as an offense against the tranquillity and consequently the peace of the world. I also see therein something which tends to frighten smaller nations or at least make them nervous.

If Mr. Roosevelt really has any specific instances in mind in this connection I would ask him to name the states which are threatened with aggression and to name the aggressor in question. It will then be possible to refute these monstrous general accusations by brief statements.

### IX.

Mr. Roosevelt states that the world is plainly moving towards the moment when this situation must end in catastrophe unless a rational way of guiding events is found.

He also declares that I have repeatedly asserted that I and the German people have no desire for war and that if this is true there need be no war.

Answer: I wish to point out, firstly, that I have not conducted any war; secondly, that for years past I have expressed my abhorrence of war and, it is true, also my abhorrence of warmongers, and, thirdly, that I am not aware for what purpose I should wage a war at all. I should be thankful to Mr. Roosevelt if he would give me some explanation in this connection.

## X.

Mr. Roosevelt is finally of the opinion that the peoples of the earth could not be persuaded that any governing power has any right or need to inflict the consequences of war on its own or any other people save in the cause of self-evident home defense.

Answer: I should think that every reasonable human being is of this opinion, but it seems to me that in almost every war both sides claim a case of unquestionable home defense, and that there is no institution in this world, including the American President himself, which could clear up this problem unequivocally. There is hardly any possibility of doubt, for example, that America's entry into the Great War was not a case of unquestionable home defense. A research committee set up by President Roosevelt himself has examined the causes of America's entry into the Great War, and reached the conclusion that the entry ensued chiefly for exclusively capitalistic reasons. Nevertheless, no practical conclusions have been drawn from this fact.

Let us hope, then, that at least the United States will in the future herself act according to this noble principle, and will not go to war against any country except in the case of unquestionable home defense.

## XI.

Mr. Roosevelt says further that he does not speak from selfishness nor fear nor weakness, but with the voice of strength and friendship for mankind.

Answer: If this voice of strength and friendship for mankind had been raised by America at the proper time, and if, above all, it had possessed some practical value, then at least there could have been prevented that treaty which has become the source of the direst derangement of humanity and history, namely, the dictate of Versailles.

## XII.

Mr. Roosevelt declares further that it is clear to him that all international problems can be solved at the council table.

Answer: Theoretically one ought to believe in this possibility, for common sense would correct demands on the one hand and show the compelling necessity of a compromise on the other.

For example, according to all common-sense logic and the general principles of a higher human justice, indeed, according to the laws of a divine will, all peoples ought to have an equal share of the goods of this world.

It ought not then to happen that one people needs so much living space that it cannot get along with fifteen inhabitants to the square kilometre, while others are forced to nourish 140, 150 or even 200 on the same area.

But in no case should these fortunate peoples curtail the existing living space of those who are, as it is, suffering, by robbing them of their colonies, for instance. I would therefore be very happy if these prob-

lems could really find their solution at the council table.

My skepticism, however, is based on the fact that it was America herself who gave sharpest expression to her mistrust in the effectiveness of conferences. For the greatest conference of all time was without any doubt the League of Nations.

This authoritative body, representing all the peoples of the world, created in accordance with the will of an American President, was supposed to solve the problems of humanity at the council table.

The first state, however, that shrank from this endeavor was the United States—the reason being that President Wilson himself even then nourished the greatest doubts of the possibility of really being able to solve decisive international problems at the conference table.

We honor your well-meant opinion, Mr. Roosevelt, but opposed to your opinion stands the actual fact that in almost twenty years of the activity of the greatest conference in the world, namely, the League of Nations, it has proved impossible to solve one single decisive international problem.

Contrary to Wilson's promise, Germany was hindered for many years by the peace treaty of Versailles from participating in this great world conference. In spite of the most bitter experience one German Government believed that there was no need to follow the example of the United States, and that they should therefore take their seat at this conference table.

It was not till after years of purposeless participation that I resolved to follow the example of America and likewise leave the largest conference in the world. Since then I have solved the problems con-



cerning my people which, like all others, were, unfortunately, not solved at the conference table of the League of Nations—and, too, without recourse to war in any case.

Apart from this, however, as already mentioned, numerous other problems have been brought before world conferences in recent years without any solution having been found.

If, however, Mr. Roosevelt, your belief that every problem can be solved at the conference table is true, then all nations, including the United States, have been led in the past 700 or 800 years either by blind men or by criminals.

For all of them, including the statesmen of the United States and especially her greatest, did not make the chief part of their history at the conference table, but with the aid of the strength of their people.

The freedom of North America was not achieved at the conference table any more than the conflict between the North and the South was decided there. I will say nothing about the innumerable struggles which finally led to the subjugation of the North American Continent as a whole.

I mention all this only in order to show that your view, Mr. Roosevelt, although undoubtedly deserving of all honor, finds no confirmation in the history either of your own country or of the rest of the world.

### XIII.

Mr. Roosevelt continues that it is no answer to the plea for peaceful discussion for one side to plead that, unless they receive assurances beforehand that the verdict will be theirs, they will not lay aside their arms.

Answer: Do you believe, Mr. Roosevelt, that when the final fate of nations is in the balance, a government or the leaders of a people will lay down their arms or surrender them before a conference, simply in the blind hope that in their wisdom or, if you like, their discernment, the other members of the conference will arrive at the right conclusion?

Mr. Roosevelt, there has been only one country and one government which have acted according to the recipe extolled in such glowing terms, and that country was Germany. The German Nation once, trusting in the solemn assurances of President Wilson and in the confirmation of these assurances by the Allies, laid down its arms and thus went unarmed to the conference table.

It is true that as soon as the German nation laid down its arms it was not even invited to the conference table, but in violation of all assurances, was made to suffer the worst breaking of a word that had ever been known.

Then one day, instead of the greatest confusion known in history being resolved around the conference table, the cruelest dictated treaty in the world brought about a still more fearful confusion.

But the representatives of the German Nation, who, trusting to the solemn assurance of an American President, had laid down their arms and therefore appeared unarmed, were not received, even when they came to accept the terms of the dictated treaty, as the representatives of a nation, which, at all events, had held out with infinite heroism against a whole world for four years in the struggle for its liberty and independence; they were subjected to even greater degradations than can ever have been inflicted on the chieftains of Sioux tribes.

The German delegates were insulted by the mob, stones were thrown at them, and they were dragged like prisoners, not to the council table of the world but before the tribunal of the victors; and there, at the pistol's point, they were forced to undergo the most shameful subjection and plundering that the world had ever known.

I can assure you, Mr. Roosevelt, that I am steadfastly determined to see to it that not only now, but for all future time, no German shall ever enter a conference defenseless, but that at all times and forever every German negotiator should and shall have behind him the united strength of the German Nation, so help me God.

#### XIV.

The President of the United States believes that in conference rooms as in courts it is necessary that both sides enter in good faith, assuming that substantial justice will accrue to both.

Answer: German representatives will never again enter a conference that is for them a tribunal. For who is to be the judge there? At a conference there is no accused and no prosecutor, but two contending parties. And if their own good sense does not bring about a settlement between the two parties, they will never surrender themselves to the verdict of disinterested foreign powers.

Incidentally, the United States herself declined to enter the League of Nations and to become the victim of a court which was able, by a majority vote, to give a verdict against individual interests. But I should be grateful to President Roosevelt if he would explain to the world what the new World Court is to be like.

Who are the judges here, according to what procedure are they selected, and on what responsibility do they act? And above all, to whom can they be made to account for their decision?

## XV.

Mr. Roosevelt believes that the cause of world peace would be greatly advanced if the nations of the world were to give a frank statement relating to the present and future policy of their governments.

Answer: I have already done this, Mr. Roosevelt, in innumerable public speeches. And in the course of this present meeting of the German Reichstag, I have again—as far as this is possible in the space of two hours—made a statement of this kind.

I must, however, decline to give such an explanation to any one else than to the people for whose existence and life I am responsible, and who, on the other hand, alone have the right to demand that I account to them. However, I give the aims of the German policy so openly that the entire world can hear it in any case.

But these explanations are without significance for the outside world as long as it is possible for the press to falsify and suspect every statement, to question it or to cover it with fresh lying replies.

## XVI.

Mr. Roosevelt believes that, because the United States as one of the nations of the Western Hemisphere is not involved in the immediate controversies which have arisen in Europe, I should therefore be willing to make such a statement of policy to him, as the head of a nation so far removed from Europe.

Answer: Mr. Roosevelt therefore seriously believes

that the cause of international peace would really be furthered if I were to make to the nations of the world a public statement on the present policy of the German Government.

But how does Mr. Roosevelt come to expect of the head of the German State, above all, to make a statement without the other governments being invited to make such a statement of their policy as well?

I certainly believe that it is not feasible to make such a statement to the head of any foreign state, but rather that such statements should preferably be made to the whole world, in accordance with the demand made at the time by President Wilson, for the abolition of secret diplomacy.

Hitherto I was not only always prepared to do this, but, as I have already said, I have done it only too often. Unfortunately, the most important statements concerning the aims and intentions of German policy have been in many so-called democratic states either withheld from the people or distorted by the press.

If, however, President Roosevelt thinks that he is qualified to address such a request to Germany or Italy, of all nations, because America is so far removed from Europe, we on our side might, with the same right, address to the President of the American Republic the question as to what aim American foreign policy has in view in its turn. And on what intentions this policy is based—in the case of the Central and South American states, for instance. In this case Mr. Roosevelt would, rightly, I must admit, refer to the Monroe Doctrine and decline to comply with such a request as an interference in the internal affairs of the American Continent. We Germans support a similar doctrine for Europe—and, above all,

for the territory and the interests of the Greater German Reich.

Moreover, I would obviously never presume to address such a request to the President of the United States of America, because I assume that he would probably rightly consider such a presumption tactless.

## XVII.

The American President further declares that he would then communicate information received by him concerning the political aims of Germany to other nations now apprehensive as to the course of our policy.

Answer: How has Mr. Roosevelt learned which nations consider themselves threatened by German policy and which do not?

Or is Mr. Roosevelt in a position, in spite of the enormous amount of work which must rest upon him in his own country, to recognize of his own accord all these inner spiritual and mental impressions of other peoples and their governments?

## XVIII.

Finally, Mr. Roosevelt asks that assurances be given him that the German armed forces will not attack, and above all, not invade, the territory or possessions of the following independent nations. He then names as those coming into question: "Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Great Britain, Ireland, France, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Russia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Iraq, the Arabias, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Iran.

Answer: I have first taken the trouble to ascertain from the states mentioned firstly, whether they feel themselves threatened, and secondly and above all, whether this inquiry by the American President was addressed to us at their suggestion or at any rate, with their consent.

The reply was in all cases negative, in some instances strongly so. It is true that I could not cause inquiries to be made of certain of the States and nations mentioned because they themselves—as for example, Syria—are at present not in possession of their freedom, but are occupied and consequently deprived of their rights by the military agents of democratic states.

Apart from this fact, however, all states bordering on Germany have received much more binding assurances and, above all, suggestions than Mr. Roosevelt asked from me in his curious telegram.

But should there be any doubt as to the value of these general and direct statements which I have so often made, then any further statement of this kind, even if addressed to the American President, would be equally worthless. For ultimately it is not the value which Mr. Roosevelt attaches to such statements which is decisive, but the value attached to these statements by the countries in question.

But I must also draw Mr. Roosevelt's attention to one or two historical errors. He mentions Ireland, for instance, and asks for a statement to the effect that Germany will not attack Ireland. Now, I have just read a speech delivered by Mr. de Valera, the Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister), in which strangely enough, and contrary to Mr. Roosevelt's opinion, he does not charge Germany with oppressing Ireland,



but reproaches England with subjecting Ireland to continuous aggression at her hands.

With all due respect to Mr. Roosevelt's insight into the needs and cares of other countries, it may nevertheless be assumed that the Irish Taoiseach will be more familiar with the dangers which threaten his country than the President of the United States.

In the same way the fact has obviously escaped Mr. Roosevelt's notice that Palestine is at present occupied not by German troops but by the English; and that the country is having its liberty restricted by the most brutal resort to force, is being robbed of its independence and is suffering the cruelest maltreatment for the benefit of Jewish interlopers.

The Arabs living in that country will therefore certainly not have complained to Mr. Roosevelt of German aggression, but they do voice a continuous appeal to the world, deploring the barbarous methods with which England is attempting to suppress a people which loves its freedom and is but defending it.

This, too, is perhaps a problem which according to the American President would have to be solved at the conference table, that is, in the presence of a just judge, and not by physical force, military means, mass executions, burning down villages, blowing up houses and so on.

For one fact is undoubtedly certain: In this case England is not defending herself against a threatened Arab attack, but as an interloper, and, without being called upon to do so, is endeavoring to establish her power in a foreign territory which does not belong to her.

A whole series of similar errors which Mr. Roosevelt has made might be pointed out, quite apart from

the difficulty of military operations on the part of Germany in states and countries, some of which are 2,000 and 5,000 kilometres away from us. In conclusion, however, I have the following statement to make:

The German Government is nevertheless prepared to give each of the states named an assurance of the kind desired by Mr. Roosevelt on the condition of absolute reciprocity, provided that the state wishes it and itself addresses to Germany a request for such an assurance together with appropriate proposals.

As concerns a number of the states included in Mr. Roosevelt's list, this question can probably be regarded as settled from the very start, since we are already either allied with them or at least united by close ties of friendship.

As for the duration of these agreements, Germany is willing to make terms with each individual state in accordance with the wishes of that state.

But I should not like to let this opportunity pass without giving above all to the President of the United States an assurance regarding those territories which would, after all, give him most cause for apprehension, namely the United States herself and the other states of the American continent.

And I here solemnly declare that all the assertions which have been circulated in any way concerning an intended German attack or invasion on or in American territory are rank frauds and gross untruths, quite apart from the fact that such assertions, as far as the military possibilities are concerned, could have their origin only in stupid imagination.

## XIX.

The American President then goes on to declare in

this connection that he regards the discussion of the most effective and immediate manner in which the peoples of the world can obtain relief from the crushing burden of armaments, as the most important factor of all.

Answer: Mr. Roosevelt perhaps does not know that this problem in so far as it concerns Germany has already been completely solved on one occasion. Between 1919 and 1923 Germany had already completely disarmed—as was expressly confirmed by the allied commissions—the extent of this disarmament being as follows:

The following military equipment was destroyed:

1. 59,000 guns and barrels.
2. 130,000 machine guns.
3. 31,000 minenwerfer (mine throwers) and barrels.
4. 6,007,000 rifles and carbines.
5. 243,000 machine gun barrels.
6. 28,000 gun carriages.
7. 4,390 minenwerfer carriages.
8. 38,750,000 shells.
9. 16,550,000 hand and rifle grenades.
10. 60,400,000 rounds live ammunition.
11. 491,000,000 rounds small caliber ammunition.
12. 335,000 metric tons shell jackets.
13. 23,515 metric tons cartridge cases.
14. 37,600 metric tons powder.
15. 79,000 unfilled rounds of ammunition.
16. 212,000 sets telephone apparatus.
17. 1,072 flame throwers, etcetera.

There were further destroyed:

Sleighs, transportable workshops, anti-aircraft carriages, gun carriages, steel helmets, gas masks, munitions industry, machinery and rifle barrels.

The following air force equipment was destroyed:  
15,714 fighters and bombers.  
27,757 airplane engines.

While in the navy, the following was destroyed:  
26 capital ships.  
4 coastal defense vessels.  
4 armored cruisers.  
19 small cruisers.  
21 training and other special ships.  
83 torpedo boats.  
315 submarines.

In addition, the following were destroyed:

Vehicles of all kinds, poison gas and (partly) anti-gas apparatus, fuel and explosives, searchlights, sighting apparatus, distance and sound-measuring apparatus, optical instruments of all kinds, harness, etc.; all aerodromes and airship hangars, etc.

According to the solemn pledges once given Germany, pledges which found their confirmation even in the peace treaty of Versailles, all this was supposed to be an advance payment which would then make it possible for the rest of the world to disarm without danger.

In this point, as in all others where Germany believed that a promise would be kept, she was disgracefully deceived. All attempts to induce the other states to disarm, pursued in negotiations at the conference table over many years, came, as is well known, to nothing. This disarmament would have been but the execution of pledges already given, and at the same time just and prudent.

I myself, Mr. Roosevelt, have made any number of

practical proposals for consultation and tried to bring about a discussion of them in order to make possible a general limitation of armaments to the lowest possible level.

I proposed a maximum strength for all armies of 200,000, similarly the abolition of all offensive weapons, of bombing planes, of poison gas, etc. It was not possible, however, to carry out these plans in the face of the rest of the world, although Germany herself was at the time completely disarmed. I then proposed a maximum of 300,000 for armies.

The proposal met with the same negative reception. I then submitted a great number of detailed disarmament proposals—in each case before the forum of the German Reichstag and consequently before the whole world. It never occurred to anyone even to discuss the matter. The rest of the world began instead to increase still further their already enormous armaments.

And not until 1934 when the last of my comprehensive proposals—that concerning 300,000 as the maximum size of the army—was ultimately turned down, did I give the order for German rearmament which was now to be very thorough.

Nevertheless, I do not want to be an obstacle in the way of disarmament discussions at which you, Mr. Roosevelt, intend to be present. I would ask you, however, not to appeal first to me and to Germany but rather to the others. I have a long line of practical experience behind me and shall remain skeptically inclined until reality has taught me to know better.

## XX.

Mr. Roosevelt gives us his pledge finally that he is

prepared to take part in discussions looking towards the most practical manner of opening up avenues of international trade to the end that every nation of the world may be enabled to buy and sell on equal terms in the world's market, as well as to possess assurances of obtaining the raw materials and products of peaceful economic life.

Answer: It is my belief, Mr. Roosevelt, that it is not so much a question of discussing these problems theoretically as of removing in practice the barriers which exist in international trade. The worst barriers, however, lie in the individual states themselves.

Experience so far shows at any rate that the greatest world economic conferences have come to nothing simply because the various countries were not able to maintain order in their domestic economic systems; or else because they infected the international capital market with uncertainty by currency manipulation, and above all by causing continual fluctuations in the value of their currencies to one another.

It is likewise an unbearable burden for world economic relations that it should be possible in some countries for some ideological reason or other to let loose a wild boycott agitation against other countries and their goods and so practically to eliminate them from the market.

It is my belief, Mr. Roosevelt, that it would be a great service if you with your great influence would remove these barriers to a genuinely free world trade beginning with the United States. For it is my conviction that if the leaders of nations are not even capable of regulating production in their own countries or of removing boycotts pursued for ideological reasons which can damage trade relations between

countries to so great an extent there is much less prospect of achieving by means of international agreements any really fruitful step towards the improvement of economic relations.

The equal right for all of buying and selling in the world's market can only be guaranteed in this way. Further, the German people has made in this regard very concrete claims and I would appreciate it very much if you, Mr. Roosevelt, as one of the successors to the late President Wilson, were to devote yourself to seeing that promises be at last redeemed, on the basis of which Germany once laid down her arms and gave herself up to the so-called victors.

I am thinking less of the innumerable millions extorted from Germany as so-called reparations than of the territories stolen from Germany.

In and outside Europe Germany lost approximately 3,000,000 square kilometres of territory, and that in spite of the fact that the whole German colonial empire, in contrast to the colonies of other nations, was not acquired by way of war but solely through treaties or purchase.

President Wilson solemnly pledged his word that the German colonial claims like all others would receive the same just examination. Instead of this, however, the German possessions were given to nations who have always had the largest colonial empires, while our people were exposed to a great anxiety which is now—as it will continue to be in the future—particularly pressing.

It would be a noble act if President Franklin Roosevelt were to redeem the promises made by President Woodrow Wilson. This would in the first place be a practical contribution to the moral consolidation of



the world and consequently to the improvement of its economic conditions.

## XXI.

Mr. Roosevelt also stated in conclusion that the heads of all great governments are in this hour responsible for the fate of humanity.

They cannot fail to hear the prayers of their peoples to be protected from the foreseeable chaos of war. And I, too, would be held accountable for this.

Mr. Roosevelt! I fully understand that the vastness of your nation and the immense wealth of your country allows you to feel responsible for the history of the whole world and for the history of all nations. I, sir, am placed in a much more modest and smaller sphere. You have 130,000,000 people on 9,500,000 square kilometres.

You possess a country with enormous riches in all mineral resources, fertile enough to feed half a billion people and to provide them with all necessities.

I once took over a state which was faced by complete ruin thanks to its trust in the promises of the rest of the world and to the bad regime of democratic governments. In this state there are roughly 140 people to each square kilometre—not 15, as in America. The fertility of our country cannot be compared with that of yours.

We lack numerous minerals which nature has placed at your disposal in unlimited quantities.

Billions of German savings accumulated in gold and foreign exchange during many years of peace were squeezed out of us and taken from us. We lost our colonies. In 1933 I had in my country 7,000,000 unemployed, a few million workers on half-time, mil-

lions of peasants sinking into poverty, destroyed trade, ruined commerce; in short, general chaos.

Since then, Mr. Roosevelt, I have only been able to fulfill one simple task. I cannot feel myself responsible for the fate of a world, as this world took no interest in the pitiful fate of my own people.

I have regarded myself as called upon by Providence to serve my own people alone and to deliver them from their frightful misery. Consequently, during the past six-and-a-half years, I have lived day and night for the single task of awakening the powers of my people in view of our desertion by the whole of the rest of the world, of developing these powers to the utmost and of utilizing them for the salvation of our community.

I have conquered chaos in Germany, re-established order, enormously increased production in all branches of our national economy, by strenuous efforts produced substitutes for numerous materials which we lack, smoothed the way for new inventions, developed traffic, caused mighty roads to be built and canals to be dug, called into being gigantic new factories and at the same time endeavored to further the education and culture of our people.

I have succeeded in finding useful work once more for the whole of the 7,000,000 unemployed who so appeal to the hearts of us all, in keeping the German peasant on his soil in spite of all difficulties and in saving the land itself for him, in once more bringing German trade to a peak and in assisting traffic to the utmost.

As a precaution against the threats of another world not only have I united the German people politically but I have also rearmed them; I have also

endeavored to destroy sheet by sheet that treaty which in its 448 articles contains the vilest oppression which peoples and human beings have ever been expected to put up with.

I have brought back to the Reich the provinces stolen from us in 1919, I have led back to their native country millions of Germans who were torn away from us and were in misery, I have re-established the historic unity of the German living space and, Mr. Roosevelt, have endeavored to attain all this without spilling blood and without bringing to my people and consequently to others the misery of war.

I, who 21 years ago was an unknown worker and soldier of my people, have attained this, Mr. Roosevelt, by my own energy and can therefore in the face of history claim a place among those men who have done the utmost which can be fairly and justly demanded from a single individual.

You, Mr. Roosevelt, have a much easier task in comparison. You became President of the United States in 1933 when I became Chancellor of the Reich. In other words, from the very outset, you stepped to the head of one of the largest and wealthiest states in the world.

You have the good fortune to have to feed scarcely 15 people per square kilometre in your country. You have at your disposal the most unlimited mineral resources in the world. As a result of the large area covered by your country and the fertility of your fields, you are enabled to insure for each individual American 10 times the amount of commodities possible in Germany. Nature has in any case enabled you to do this.

In spite of the fact that the population of your

country is scarcely one-third greater than the number of inhabitants in Greater Germany, you possess more than 15 times as much living space. Conditions prevailing in your country are on such a large scale that you can find time and leisure to give your attention to universal problems. Consequently, the world is undoubtedly so small for you that you perhaps believe that your intervention and action can be effective everywhere.

In this sense, therefore, your concerns and suggestions cover a much larger and wider area than mine, because my world, Mr. Roosevelt, in which Providence has placed me and for which I am therefore obliged to work, is unfortunately much smaller, although for me it is more precious than anything else, for it is limited to my people!

I believe, however, this is the way in which I can be of most service to that for which we are all concerned, namely the justice, well-being, progress and peace of the whole human community.